

Returning with Mama

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sequel to 'Quest for Mama', Naruto and company return to the Hidden Leaf Village with his mother. What follows is a time of re-adjustment for everyone...especially the Village! Slight OP xOver at the very end.

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GateCrashing, Mamastyle

Here it is

Here it is! The once-mentioned and highly anticipated sequel to my previous Naruto fic, *The Quest For Mama* . What? You've never read, *The Quest For Mama* ? Well, get to it! In the meantime, for those who had, here's the story you guys have wanted to read!

Returning with Mama

Kishimoto owns Naruto.

Opening theme: Flush(5th opening theme of Monster Rancher)

Chapter 1: *Gate-Crashing, mama-style*

Outside the Hidden Leaf Village, a group of six individuals walked down the road to it.

Uzumaki Naruto, container of the Ninetailed Fox Spirit. Up-and coming Hokage.

Haruno Sakura, medic ninja. Tsunade's apprentice.

Nara Shikamaru, shadow-manipulation user. Strategist.

Hyuga Hinata, Gentle Fist fighter and Byakugan user. Naruto's admirer.

Rock Lee, taijutsu specialist, known for his bowl cut.

Kawazaki, demon-seal master from Mt. Oinari. An intelligent frog.

And Uzumaki Kushina, Naruto's long-lost, but now returned, mother. The only human being who could rule Kaiju Island and survivor of the Land of Whirlpools.

"There it is!" Naruto cried out, pointing.

'It' was the main gate of the Hidden Leaf Village, the only direct way into the town.

"We're almost home!" He shouted exuberately.

"Home." Kushina said softly, her eyes on the large entryway. She had lived in the Leaf Village for a while, but she had never thought of it as home...until now.

"Welcome back, Guy, Anko." Tsunade said from behind her desk. Might Guy and Mitarashi Anko had been out on a mission together, and had returned for the debriefing. "How did the mission go?"

"It went well, Lady Fifth," Anko said, grinning. "Guy's disguise worked like a charm."

"Yes... Maybe a little too well." Guy said, rubbing one eye with his hand.

Tsunade noticed this. "What happened to you?"

"It...turns out my choice of disguise made me resemble some other man," Guy began hesitantly, "And one of his enemies challenged me to a duel. I couldn't fight back without blowing my cover." Guy quickly cleared his throat. "But more importantly, where's my cute student, Lee? I haven't seen him since returning!"

"I sent him on a rescue mission with Naruto and a group of select shinobi." Tsunade answered.

Anko cocked her head. "Rescue mission? For who?"

Tsunade grinned. "Uzumaki Kushina."

The silence, which, given the company in question, was enough sign that the 'Legend of Kunshina' had not been completely forgotten, and

the dropped jaws clinched it.

"She's alive?" Guy asked finally, a look of utter disbelief on his face.

"Apparently so," Tsunade confirmed, enjoying the look of sheer panic on their faces.

"But...won't that, you know..." Anko tried to arrange her thoughts into a coherent process, "Be a problem? Didn't she..."

"Try to slaughter the entire counsel in a protective frenzy days after the Fox's attack?" Tsunade asked. "I know, I've heard about it. But there's nothing I can do. Practically every ninja and adult from those days are still scared stiff of her. Hopefully, we, and by that I mean you, can get through this without *too* many deaths." Tsunade took a moment to stretch her arms, something that made Guy take notice. "Your best bet is to just straight out admit your mistakes and beg for forgiveness. I'm having the hospital set a wing aside for the occasion."

That did not make the two Jounin feel any better.

"We're here!" Naruto declared, as the team and his mother arrived at the giant gate that acted as the common entrance to the village (Though any ninja worth his salt wouldn't be stopped by a mere door, no matter how big it was.).

"I'll tell the guards on duty to open up," Sakura said. She opened her mouth to call out, but stopped when Kushina held her hand up.

"Don't bother. Let me." Kushina said. She began to stretch herself, working out any kinks in her body.

"Wh-what are you going to do?" Hinata asked hesitantly.

Kushina balled her hand into a fist and pulled back. "I'll just knock."

With speed unseen by any of the young ninja, Kushina slammed her fist into the gate.

All over the Hidden Leaf Village, Ninja and normal citizens alike heard the loud 'bang' that echoed through the air. This sound had different reactions. While some of the younger ones were curious and startled by the loud noise, the older ones were terrified.

In his private quarters, Danzo instinctively clutched at the stump where his missing arm used to be.

Up in her office, Tsunade looked up from her papers and stared at the ceiling.

It's her... She's back!

At the entrance, the five Leaf Ninja stared in wide-eyed amazement at where the gate used to be. In the entryway, large pieces of wood were scattered across the street.

Kushina wiped her brow and straightened. "Well," She glanced at the younger ninja behind her.

"The gate..." Naruto said at last. "You just...knocked it down."

Kushina glanced at the ruined gate. "Yeah, it should be more than that, but I'm just getting old, I guess."

"No one...has ever done anything like that," Sakura said, finding her voice. "And you're *disappointed*?"

"Ah, there lots of people that can do that," Kushina replied, shrugging Sakura's accusation off, "What I did was nothing!"

Laughing, Kushina slung her arm around Naruto's shoulder. "Now, come on! Let's see how much this dump has changed!"

As mother and son entered the village, the other four ninja stared after them.

"Do you think she was telling the truth?" Hinata asked anxiously.

"Oh, she was being very truthful," Kawasaki answered, hopping past them, "The world as you know it is much smaller than the world as it is."

As Kawasaki hopped in past them, Shikamaru only had one comment.

"If there are people like her out there, I don't wanna meet them." he said, massaging his temples.

AN: That's opening things with a DON! I've always imagined Naruto's mom having super-strength like Tsunade and Sakura(Is it a running gag for close women he knows to have power like that?), but not having the chakra control to emulate theirs, merely 'pumped up!', so don't be surprised if Kushina demonstrates more 'monster-power' throughout the story. I've always thought that if Naruto and One Piece(A series whose greatness is such that I don't need to write fanfics for it) took place in the same universe, countries like Water and Whirlpool would be close to the Grand Line.(It would certainly explain Kisame and his strength...Anyone think he's a Fishman?

One last thing. Since I'm making this up as I go along, unlike QFM(Quest For Mama), updates may be erratic. So don't just review saying, "PLEASE UPDATE!" Tell me what you think, what you felt, and so forth. Tell the author(Tha-a-at's me!)

Ciao!

Touring

Missed me

Missed me?

Kishimoto owns Naruto .

Opening theme: *Fundari Kettari* (7th opening theme for Keroro Gunso)

Chapter 2: *Touring*

As Naruto and Kushina walked down the streets of the Hidden Leaf Village, the blond one eagerly pointed various 'landmarks', that were more or less ordinary places that he spent some time at one point. As he blathered on and on, the rest of the team and Kawazaki trailed behind, not wanting to get between the mother and son as they were bonding.

Sakura inwardly marveled that Naruto, someone who had failed numerous tests in the academy for not remembering subject information, could recall various minor incidents from when he was four years old, such as a specific street sign he climbed once to get a better view at a store's display.

"Well," Shikamaru said, stretching, "I'm going to go give my report to the Fifth, so I'll be going. What about you?"

"I'll be looking for Neji and Tenten," Lee said, "I'm sure they'll be curious on how the mission went!"

"I, um, would like to stay with Naruto," Hinata spoke up, fiddling with her fingers. "I'd like to get to know Ms. Kushina more."

"Same here," Sakura said. She was very concerned about Naruto's mother after talking to the gate watchers after Kushina knocked the

gate down...

As Team Shikamaru walked through the now-destroyed entryway into the Leaf Village, Sakura noticed a lack of personnel in the gatekeeper's booth.

(A/N: Whatever they call it in canon...)

" Hello?" Sakura asked, walking over to the window. Upon closer inspection, she found Hagane Kotetsu and Kamizuki Izumo hiding down behind the edge, just out of sight.

" Um, what are you doing?" Sakura asked, confused. Cowering was not something your average shinobi did.

" That woman, who knocked the gate down..." Izumo began, nervously.

" Her?" Sakura looked to where Naruto was leading Kushina down the street. "That's Naruto's mother, Kushina."

" We know." The pair deadpanned.

" You do? Is she famous?" Sakura asked, looking back at them.

" More like infamous." Izumo muttered.

" Before disappearing," Kotetsu continued, "She tried to kill every member of the counsel, including the Third Hokage."

Sakura stared. First at them, and then at the Uzumakis retreating backsides.

Sakura hoped she wouldn't be forced to pick sides if a fight broke out. She wasn't sure if she could handle it... Pulling herself back into reality, she was just in time to see Naruto introduce the most important(In his mind) establishment in all of the Hidden Leaf Village.

"And this, is Ichiraku Ramen!" Naruto proclaimed, gesturing wildly.

Kushina smiled at her son's childish enthusiasm. "Favorite place to eat?" She asked.

"You know it! That reminds me." Naruto turned to the stand and called out. "Hey, old man Teuchi! Two bowls of your best for me and my mama!"

"Coming right up," Teuchi replied absentmindedly. It was a scant three seconds before the full impact of Naruto's order hit.

"Mama!?" He, his daughter Ayame, and the hired hands Nishi and Matsu rushed to the counter to see who Naruto was talking about.

"Hi, there." Kushina waved.

After the ramen was made and served, conversation ensued.

"I had no idea your mother was alive," Ayame said, pouring Kawazaki a glass of tea. The frog had not said anything up to this point, but Naruto had asked for him. "It's an honor to meet you, ma'am."

"Same here," Kushina said, pausing between bites of ramen. "Naruto told me you and your father were nice to him, I couldn't thank you enough for that."

"Haha, who wouldn't?" Teuchi laughed. "I've never understood what's going between him and the older villagers, but anyone like him is welcome at my stand!"

Naruto grinned through a mouthful of ramen. He liked it when people talked about him like that.

"Hey, boss!"

Looking, Naruto and company saw Konohamaru running up to them, with Moegi and Udon following close behind.

"Hey, Konohamaru," Naruto replied. He waved for the Third Hokage's grandson and his team to join them.

But Konohamaru was in no mood for niceties. "Boss, you're not gonna believe what's going on! It's a good thing you got back from that mission!"

Naruto's friendly smile vanished. "Why, what's going on?"

"Something just knocked down the gate!" Konohamaru shouted, waving his arms around.

Sakura and Hinata exchanged looks. Meanwhile, Kushina crossed her arms, looking satisfied.

"And all the old folks are going crazy, 'cause all they say is, 'it's her,' and 'she's back,' and-" Konohamaru paused in his rant when he noticed that Naruto had more than one kunoichi companion. Namely, the older, red-haired one. "Hey, who's she?"

Naruto looked confused for a second, then he realized who Konohamaru was talking about.

"Oh, Konohamaru, this is my mother, Kushina." Naruto introduced.

Konohamaru blinked. "You mean...this is...?"

Kushina smiled pleasantly. "So you're old man Sarutobi's grandson? My son told me about you."

Konohamaru was taken aback. He never imagined Naruto's mother being anything like *this*. From what the rumors going around the Village said, this woman should have been some kind of inhuman monster.

"N-nice to meet you." He said at last. He gestured behind him. "These are my teammates."

"I'm Moegi." The Konohamaru Corps. Kunoichi said, bowing politely.

"Udon," Udon said simply.

"It's nice to meet you," Kushina smiled. "But what I want to know is..." Kushina suddenly grabbed a salt-shaker and threw it an alley entryway. " *Who the hell is that!?* "

The projectile hit its mark, causing the target to go down. Kushina walked over to her victim, a suspicious glint in her eyes.

"I can't stand perverts who stare at kids and women from dark alleyways..." She said firmly, preparing to interrogate said-pervert. "Who does this clown think he is!?"

She stopped when she felt a hand on her shoulder.

"Um, mama," Naruto said, uneasily. "I think that guy's a pervert too, but..."

Udon sniffed. "You just knocked out Ebisu-sensei..."

On the ground, the famed teacher twitched and moaned, a visible dent in his cheek.

A/N: Sorry for not updating in a while, but I've been feeling... unmotivated. That's just lazyness for you.

I wanted Kushina to meet one of Naruto's sensei's in this chapter, but I didn't know which one. I decided on Ebisu(Hey, he gave Naruto SOME training in the Chunin Exam before Jiraiya took over!), because I wanted Konohamaru to meet Kushina as well, so this way I strike two birds with one stone! ...Of course Kushina struck Ebisu with the salt...

Review, please!

Tall Tales

I'm Ba-ack! And I'm a little puzzled. I've lost count of how many people 'favorited' my story, but out of all those people, only FIVE(Of this writing) reviewed? What's up with that? I mean, I need to hear your input and thoughts on this in order to get motivated, folks! So, don't just sign up for update alerts, TELL ME WHAT YOU THINK!!

It's okay...I'm fine now....On with the fic!

If you haven't figured out that Kishimoto owns Naruto , then you haven't been paying attention.

Opening theme: Bouken Desho Desho(1st opening theme of *The Melancholy of Suzumiya Haruhi*)

Chapter 3: *Tall Tales*

Shikamaru stood in front of Tsunade's desk, relaying the events of the mission while the 'Princess' sat back, listening.

"...And that's it, ma'am," Shikamaru finished, "After leaving the ship with Oda in the Land of Waves, we came back here."

Tsunade leaned forward, intrigued about something. "And you are *sure* those men that attacked you before reaching the Land of Monsters were bounty hunters?" She asked.

"Yeah, they had to be." Shikamaru shrugged, scratching the back of his head, "I can't think of any other reason why a bunch of random strangers would try to jump us like that."

Tsunade leaned back, deep in thought. Who would put a bounty on Naruto? It couldn't have been Akatsuki, they were trying to keep as low-profile as possible. Was it someone Naruto encountered while training with Jiraiya?

Deciding to put the matter on the shelf for another day, Tsunade chose to grill Shikamaru on another subject.

"So..." The 5th Hokage said, putting her hands together. "What do you think of her?"

"Who?" Shikamaru asked automatically.

Tsunade threw a stapler at him. "You know who! Kushina, pineapple-head!"

Shikamaru ducked and the office tool flew into the wall, creating a small crater. "If you want to talk to her, just send an ANBU to Ichiraku Ramen. If Naruto hasn't taken her there yet, he will."

Tsunade shook her head. "No, I want them to bond for today. You didn't answer my question; what do you think of Uzumaki Kushina?"

Shikamaru sighed. "I think she's crazy." He said simply. "She spent fifteen years on that god-forsaken island, fighting monsters, hating the village because she thought we killed Naruto when he was a baby. She looks and acts okay now, but..." He trailed off. "I'm just don't know what to expect. And that scares me."

Tsunade nodded. Being the strategist he was, Shikamaru hated being in a situation he couldn't think his way out of. If things didn't go as planned, he fell apart. While he had gotten smarter since that disastrous Sasuke Retrieval mission, and the ever-changing battle conditions, he still had that one weakness.

No plan, no hope. And thinking on his feet(Which Naruto seemed to excel in) was not his style.

Shizune, standing next to Tsunade, shifted uncomfortably. "Lady Tsunade, what if Kushina...does something?" She asked anxiously.

Tsunade shrugged, closing her eyes. "What do you think, Nara?" The 'Legendary Loser' asked Shikamaru.

Shikamaru looked to the ceiling. "Well, it's clear that Ms. Kushina's only has a grudge against the 'old crowd', like my dad and the others his age. If she decides to get them..." Shikamaru paused, "If it was an Akatsuki, I might help out. But I don't want to get in front of a natural disaster like that. A few weeks ago, I might have, but not now."

Tsunade opened her eyes and gave him a hard look. *He knows about the Fox.* "Naruto tell you?" She asked.

"He told Hinata and Lee," Shikamaru replied. " I figured it out."

Tsunade, in spite of herself, laughed.

Back at Ichiraku Ramen, Konohamaru joined the luncheon while Udon and Moegi dragged Ebisu to the hospital(his jaw needed to be reset, it turned out.).

After Konohamaru ordered his ramen,(Naruto offered to buy, but Konohamaru insisted that since he was 'a man', he should pay for his own meals) the first thing he said to Kushina was this;

"So you're Boss's mom?" he asked, "Where were you this whole time?"

Sakura and Hinata gulped. That was the one question they both wanted to ask, but had been too afraid to get near such a touchy subject.

Kushina set her bowl down. For a good long while, she remained silent.

"It was the Uchiha Clan," She said softly.

This got everyone's attention.

"What do you mean?" Naruto asked, a strange expression on his face.

"That night..." She began, "Four men came to the house I was raising you in. I recognized them from their Sharingan eyes immediately. They attacked me, us." Kushina's voice took a mournful, scornful tone. "I didn't know who they were coming after. The entire town wanted to kill Naruto because of...you know. But Uchiha Fugaku, the Clan head, hated me like poison because I was stronger than him. Much stronger." She chuckled. "Ever since that tournament... Anyway, they came at me from all sides. Those worthless bastards knew they couldn't win in a fair fight, so they tried to ambush me. But I gave them a fight they wouldn't forget. But just when it looked like I had them all...it happened."

"What happened?" Naruto asked, his eyes hardened like diamonds.

"I don't know...I've had fifteen years to think about it, but I can't explain what happened." Kushina replied unhappily. "I remember this feeling like being caught in a tornado, and then...I was on that island."

Naruto's eyes squinted as he thought about it. "Well...Kakashi Sensei can make things disappear with his Sharingan once...maybe it was something like that."

Sakura looked at the ground. "I still can't believe the Uchiha Clan would do something like that." Sure, Itachi and Sasuke had gone rogue, but their circumstances were...circumstantial.

Kushina let out a harsh laugh. "Ha! Have you ever *met* the Uchiha Clan?" She asked, giving Sakura a bemused look. "Your average Uchiha warrior is about as arrogant and obnoxious as you can get. If their heads were any bigger they'd need tailor-made hats!"

Both mother and son laughed at that, both seeming to know *exactly* what she was talking about.

Yup, they're related. Teuchi thought.

"I swear," Kushina snickered, it's like those guys were *born* to be bastards, or something!"

Naruto slowly stopped laughing as if something had just occurred to him. Like someone had turned on a lightbulb over his head.

"A chakra...darker and eviler than his own..." He murmured, remembering something the Fox had said about the Uchiha.

"N-Naruto?" Hinata asked, overhearing. "Did you say something?"

"Huh?" Naruto realized that he had spoken. "It's nothing, Hinata."

Hinata wasn't really convinced, and from the looks of things, neither was Naruto.

Out of the corner of her eye, Kushina looked at her son through a narrowed eyelid.

Revelations

Kishimoto owns Naruto .

Opening theme: Blue Bird(3rd opening theme for *Naruto Shippuden*)

Chapter 4: *Revelations*

After lunch at Ichiraku Ramen, Naruto took his mom around the village some more, with Sakura, Hinata, and Konohamaru tagging along. The tour afterwards was pretty uneventful, up until they arrived at the barbecue restaurant frequented by Team Asuma.

"Hey! Guys!"

Turning around, the group saw Choji and Ino walking up to them. For some reason, Kushina's eyes narrowed when she saw Choji. Introductions were made, and Kushina took Choji aside for a second.

"That's Naruto's mom?" Ino asked Sakura.

"That's her." Sakura nodded.

"Her hair is so beautiful..." Ino commented, then she smirked.
"Naruto definitely doesn't take after her."

Sakura sighed. The poor fool. "Just wait until you talk to her, you'll see the resemblance."

Meanwhile, Kushina was busy talking to Choji, and her next words nearly caused figurative volcano to erupt. Figuratively.

"So are you Akimichi Choza's son?" Kushina asked the young, *rotund* , ninja, "How's that fat ogre doing?"

Choji's friendliness vanished instantly. "What did you say?" He asked, his eyes narrowing dangerously, his muscles tensing.

Naruto quickly grabbed his mother and pulled her out of the 'danger zone', that being Choji's armlength.

"Mama!" He whispered, "You can't use the 'F' word around Choji! He'll go nuts!"

Kushina looked at Choji for a moment, then separated herself from Naruto.

"Got teased a lot?" She asked.

Choji, who hadn't calmed down, and was being restrained by Sakura, Hinata, Ino, *and* Konohamaru, nodded.

"Well, get used to it," Kushina stated, matter-of-factly. "Trash-talk and derogatory comments are part of the battle zone, so just ignore 'em. And besides," She looked Choji in the eye, "Flying off the handle like that...shows you acknowledge their comments as the truth."

Choji stared at her for a moment, before looking down. "You're right, I'm sorry."

The girls and Konohamaru sighed in relief and let Choji go. Crisis averted!

"You're forgiven," Kushina smiled, "I'm used to dealing with idiots."

Ino looked at Sakura. "You know what I said earlier? I take it back."

Sakura nodded. "I thought you might..."

Choji rubbed his head. "So, uh, you know my dad?"

Kushina nodded. "That's right."

"I thought you might," Choji said, "You see, whenever I asked my dad about you, he'd just looked scared and wouldn't answer."

"All the adults have been doing that," Ino commented, "It's really weird."

"Good, they remember me," Kushina said, cracking her knuckles. "Because I can't forget them...not after what they all tried to do."

"What was that?" Ino asked, cocking her head.

There was a great silence before Kushina answered.

"They all tried to kill Naruto."

There was an even longer silence as everyone present stood there, shocked.

"...What?" Naruto asked, breaking the pause. There was a strange look in his eyes.

Kushina sighed. "Every time I went to town, some yahoo would try to 'finish what the Fourth Lord had started.' It got to the point where I had to smack someone for even *looking* at Naruto with malice."

Ino was shocked. "But...that's...didn't the Third Hokage *do anything*?!" She asked, horrified.

"Ha!" Kushina laughed scornfully. "He and the council were the first ones to *talk* about killing Naruto." She then looked thoughtful. "Though he *might* have been trying to stop them..."

"Of *course* he was trying to stop them!" Konohamaru yelled angrily.

"Why would they, anyway?" Choji asked, squinting in confusion. Was this connected to Naruto's taboo...?

Sakura exchanged looks with Hinata. Was Kushina going to reveal Naruto's secret...?

"Because they're a bunch inhuman bastards, that's why!" Kushina spat angrily. Behind her, Sakura and Hinata sighed with relief.

Choji and Ino weren't completely convinced, but decided no to push the issue. Naruto, however, wasn't completely done with it.

"How many...?" Naruto said, his voice thick with an emotion no one could decipher, "How many people tried to kill me?"

Umino Iruka, teacher at the Leaf Village Ninja Academy, ran through the streets of the village, occasionally leaping across rooftops and off of walls. As he ran, he couldn't help but remember his earlier conversation with Kakashi...

"What?!" Iruka cried. He and several other ninja were standing at the remains of the main gate. Across from him, Hatake Kakashi stood off to the side, leaning against a nearby wall in that aloof manner he always portrayed.

"Yeah," Kakashi said, staring at the wreckage. "It was Naruto's mother who did this."

"But...for a single woman to do this..." Iruka said, trying to make sense of it all, "She'd have to be..."

"A monster?" Kakashi asked, chuckling. "Yeah, you're right. If it were anyone else, I'd be as shocked as you are...but I've seen the results of Ms. Kushina's handy work before, so I gotta say...she must have been feeling tired, or something."

Iruka didn't answer. He was too busy staring at the gate, or what was left of it. His eyes were focusing on a mark that suspiciously like a fist...

Kakashi continued to talk. "Actually, I'm kinda jealous of you, Iruka. Even after all the training Jiraiya and I gave him, he still considers you his favorite teacher. I'm sure he's telling Kushina all the fun times he's had with you...and meanwhile I'll given the death sentence from Kushina for ignoring Naruto during the Chunin Exam in favor

Sasuke... It's weird a feeling to have, knowing when your end will be...right?"

Kakashi turned his head to where Iruka was standing. The chunin was no longer there.

...Did I just get snubbed by a chunin? Kakashi thought.

Iruka leapt over a fire hydrant and quickened his pace.

Is Naruto's mother really her? He thought frantically, Is it really that woman!?

(A/N: Sorry if this chapter was a little more glum than usual... I'll make it up next time, seriously!)

Legend of the Queen

(Heeey! I'm baaack! Sorry, but I haven't been motivated lately what with the lack of reviews. Anyway, on with the show!)

Kishimoto owns Naruto.

Opening Theme: Hikari E(3rd opening theme of One Piece)

Chapter 5: Legend of the Queen

"C'mon," Kushina said, wrapping her arm around her son's shoulder, "Let's go."

Mother and son walked the streets alone, as the rest of Naruto's friends had taken off, to, 'talk about this with their families.'

As they walked, Naruto couldn't help but look at the people, the older people, of the village in a different eye than before. The news that he could've been killed, as a baby, though unsurprising in retrospect, had not improved Naruto's already poor view of the village elders.

"Hey," Kushina said, ruffling Naruto's hair, "Don't look so glum. I told what had happened to explain *my* feelings on the villagers, not so you could turn into one of those gothic, 'I wanna kill the world' types."

Naruto, in spite of himself, laughed. What Kushina didn't know was that she described Gaara's old persona *perfectly* .

"Hey!" He said suddenly, "Let's go see Granny Tsunade!"

Kushina shrugged. "Whatever you want, though I still can't see one of the Sannin's Tsunade being Hokage. Last I saw her, she didn't seem like the type to take on the job...in fact, I think she hated the job,"

"Yeah, but I changed her mind!" Naruto bragged, his arms folded behind his head.

As the small family(And Kawazaki, who kept getting strange looks) walked/hopped off, none of them noticed a shadowy figure glaring at them, or more specifically, Kushina, from a dark alley.

"So..." Tsume Inuzuka hissed, her fangs bared, "You really are alive, Kushina..."

Meanwhile, Kiba, Shino, and Akamaru were walking around, trying to find Naruto. While the Inuzuka pair did catch Naruto's scent, finding his trail was another matter.

"Where the heck are they!" Kiba growled angrily, "What, is that idiot showing his mom the whole village!?"

Because Naruto's impromptu tour had no real course or planning, his scent, along with the scent of his mother, was all over the village, often causing the trails to intersect each other.

"We'll find him," Shino assured, not too put off by Kiba's attitude. He was used to it. "Why don't we just wait near his house if it's so important?" Shino didn't really see the point of meeting Naruto's mother so quickly. Especially, if the rumors were true, that she was as mindlessly destructive as Naruto was on a bad day.

"No, I wanna find him and this mother of his now," Kiba grunted, getting on all fours and sniffing the ground- like a dog.

"What's the rush?" Shino asked. Normally, Kiba didn't need a reason- he just rushed into things, vaguely aware of what needed to be done. But now the Inuzuka heir seemed worried as well, on top of his usual hot-headedness.

Sighing, Kiba got up and faced his teammate and friend. "Look," He began, looking more serious than he normally was, "When I

mentioned to mom that this...Kushina lady might be alive. She got really mad."

"What did she say?" Shino asked, intrigued.

"Nothing."

"Nothing?" Shino was no officially worried.

The Inuzuka weren't very quiet about their emotions, unless they really worked at it. And loud, they were plenty loud. If one was angry, there'd be some barking and growling. So when an Inuzuka was angry 'beyond words or audible sounds' that meant *trouble*.

"That's why I need to find this woman before mom does," Kiba continued, "I want to know what's going on before a fight breaks out."

Shino silently concurred, seeing where Kiba was going. Tsume Inuzuka, when truly and honestly violently upset, was a force to be reckoned with. Adding to the myth of Kushina's superhuman abilities, a fight between those two would cause unthinkable amounts of damage to everyone around them.

"Let's go," He decided, unleashing bugs from his body.

As the boys of Team Kurenai were busy trying to prevent what they saw as a disaster in the making, Naruto and Kushina were at the entrance to Hokage Tower.

"I can't believe it's been sixteen years since I was last here," Kushina commented wistfully.

"Sixteen years?" Naruto asked, incredulous.

"You can't wage war on the council and act like nothing happened afterward," Kushina replied, then thought about it. "Well, I can, but I

just didn't feel like coming back."

Naruto shook his head, grinning. He had such a cool mom! Shrugging it off, Naruto leapt up onto the wall. "Let's go!"

Now it was Kushina's turn to look incredulous. "Didn't anyone tell you about doors?" She asked.

"When I was a kid, it was easier to get in through the window," Naruto explained. "I'm just used to doing it this way."

"Well, that's going to stop." Kushina declared. "You're going to be hokage, so you shouldn't have to sneak around your future headquarters! C'mon!"

Without another word, Kushina strode into the building, slamming the doors open. Watching her, Naruto shrugged and followed.

At one of the designated ANBU posts surrounding the Tower, an ANBU in a fish mask was talking to an ANBU in an owl mask.

"So, why's everyone so tense about this Kushina lady?" Fish-mask asked his partner. "Sure, she's strong, and maybe a little nuts...but so are all the other superstars in the village."

Owl-mask turned to his younger, less experienced partner. "Oh, that's right. You're a rookie. Only joined last year."

"So, what's up?" the ANBU rookie asked.

Owl-mask sighed. "During the 3rd Ninja War...there was this kunoichi. Unstoppable. Unbeatable. And no affiliation to any Village. She dominated every battle she entered. For that, they started calling her the Queen, a kunoichi who surpassed Princess Tsunade. Some say she equaled the Fourth Hokage. Others say she was *stronger* than the fourth lord."

"Whoa... Is that true?" the rookie was clearly impressed.

"I don't know, they never met on the battlefield." The veteran replied. "Anyway, when the Fourth Hokage saved the village from the Nine-tailed Fox Spirit by sacrificing a child, turns out it was *her* child."

Fish-mask was transfixed. "You mean...she's *his* mother?"

"It gets worse," Owl-mask continued, "There was a meeting to decide the fate of the child. When the Queen found out..." He trailed off.

Fish-mask was silent for a minute, pondering. Then it came to him. "You mean... *that's* what caused the tower to explode? One woman!?"

Owl-mask nodded. "And that was only the beginning. For a good eighteen months she had the run of the village, up until she disappeared."

"And now she's back?" the Fish-mask sounded scared. "What do we do? What do *I* do!?"

Owl-Mask patted his shoulder. "Calm down. It may not be so bad. I heard that she and Lady Tsunade were friends back in the day, so it might not be so- UH!" Owl-mask keeled over.

"Are you okay?" Fish-mask bent over to check his Senpai*. "Senpai? Senpai!? Uh!" Fish-mask went down as well.

"Tsunade! This is serious!" Homura protested. The advisory council were having a meeting with Tsunade about the 'impending doom'.

Tsunade wasn't paying attention to them.

"It'll be all right." Tsunade shrugged, taking a sip of some sake'.

"You don't know what this woman is like!" Koharu half-yelled. "You left before she showed her true colors! We're all in danger..."

"No, *you're* in danger." Tsunade said smugly, "I wonder how Kushina will react to the two people trying to actively sabotage his career as a ninja..." Her smile turned sadistic. "...And how long you two will last without your hokage's protection."

The two old ones drew back in horror.

"You'd leave us, you're advisors," Homura gasped, "To that demon woman?"

"*Advisors?* Ha!" Tsunade laughed scornfully. "You don't give me advice, you give me a hard time!"

"And *who's* a demon woman?"

With a start, the elders turned around to see the Uzumakis standing behind them, glaring. Before either of the two elders could react, they suddenly fainted.

"I guess you finally perfected it." Tsunade observed.

"So you were doing it on purpose!" Naruto exclaimed. Tsunade looked at him. "All the ANBU were fainting like these two on our way up." He explained. "I thought they were just scared of mom...I didn't know she could make them faint!"

"Kushina!" Tsunade cried, shooting an exasperated glare at the younger woman.

Kushina shrugged, and scratched the back of her head. "Sorry, heh heh. I'm not really liked by some of the people here, so I decided to make a threat." She explained, chuckling.

Tsunade rolled her eyes. Her attention was drawn to Kawazaki, who was poking Homura. "What do we do with these two?"

Naruto grinned, a mischievous look in his eyes. "Let's doodle on their faces before they wake up!" He snickered.

"I have a marker!" Kawazaki proclaimed.

A/N: I'm back! Yeah, took a while, sorry. Not many people were reviewing as much I needed to feel motivated, and I got stuck doing another story. It's called, Drag Race: Worldwide, and it's in the Cartoon Xover sub-section of Misc. Read it! And I'll try to update quicker. Once again, I'm sorry. Review, please! Oh, and if you want to get a good idea of what the fight between Kushina and the council, try watching the Straw Hats vs Franky Family fight on Youtube. I keep imaging it happening something like that...And I got one more thing from One Piece, that I'm using in the story now. Later!

*Senpai- a Japanese term for someone who is older and more experienced in whatever thing you're in, like a senior officer. A junior officer would be a Kopai.

The Queen's Treasure

Naruto belongs Kishimoto.

Opening theme: Aishitageru (Opening theme of Disgaea)

Chapter 6: The Queen's Treasure

Everyone at Hokage Tower was in a frenzy. The unconscious ANBU had everyone on the edge.

"Looks like Naruto and Kushina are here," Kakashi noted, standing over the prone form of an ANBU. Yamato was checking his vitals to make sure he was alive.

"This is odd..." Yamato noted.

"Nah, Kushina did this kind of stuff all the time during the 3rd War," Kakashi shrugged.

"She did??? I mean, that's not what I meant." Yamato corrected. He got up and pointed at the down ANBU. "He's unconscious, but I can't find any signs of physical damage. Even the Hyuuga's Juken leaves a faint trace. And he's not under a genjutsu, either...what happened?"

Kakashi's eye narrowed in thought, then widened in disbelief. "I don't believe it, she's done it..."

"Done what?" Yamato asked.

Many years ago, probably three months before the Ninetailed Fox Spirit would ravage the Village Hidden in the Leaves, a younger, but now Obito-less Kakashi came upon a strange sight while looking for his sensei; The pregnant Uzumaki Kushina, staring at a cat. The Nara's family cat, to be specific.

"What are you doing?" Kakashi asked, confused. While Kushina was prone to doing things that were considered odd, they were mostly stuff ordinary people would think too dangerous to attempt. Like her supposed theft of the Mist Village's Seven Swords, but Kakashi had trouble believing that one...

"Mmmmm... Oh, hi, Kakashi." Kushina greeted, moving her gaze from the feline. "I'm practicing a new technique."

"Oh, really..." Kakashi vaguely wondered if it was too late back out for what was guaranteed to be another headache-inducing conversation with his sensei's love.

"It's like this," Kushina explained, "In this state of my pregnancy, I'm pretty vulnerable. I mean, I can still punch, but I've lost a lot of my mobility."

Kakashi said nothing, choosing to instead take a better look at Kushina's now swelled stomach.

"So," Kushiha continued, ignoring his silence, "I'm trying to learn how to defeat any potential attackers without really moving too much. If any of my enemies found me like this, I'm done for."

"We could help," Kakashi commented, not specifying who 'we' were.

Kushina rolled her eyes. "No offense, just one of my enemies can plow through an army of Leaf Ninjas pretty easily. Thanks for offering though. Anyway, I'm trying to learn how to slow my opponent down by just thinking at him, through will power alone."

"What, like Telepathy?" Kakashi asked, intrigued. If such a technique was possible...

"Something like it," And with that, Kushina went back to staring at the cat. Almost immediately, the cat fell off the ledge it was lying on.

"Ahh! It...It work!" Kushina looked over the edge. "I've mastered psychic power!"

Kakashi walked away, shaking slightly.

Kakashi was brought out of his memories by the sound of someone moaning. The ANBU Yamato was examining had woken up! ...Kinda.

"Ohhh...what happened?" The ANBU (Who, judging from the voice, was Yugao Uzuki.) muttered, clutching her head.

"Are you okay?" Yamato helped her up. "What happened?"

"I don't really know..." She said, sitting up, "Before I passed out, I felt this... *force* ...like someone dropped a huge weight that wasn't there on me..."

Kakashi and Yamato exchanged looks of worry.

In Tsunade's office, the Uzumaki family, the Hokage, and Kawazaki were having a similar discussion.

"Whaaaat!" Naruto cried, his eyes bugging out, "You can *will* someone down?! How can you do something like that?"

"I'm not really sure how I do it myself," Kushina admitted, "But it only works on people with weaker spirits than I."

"You gotta teach me it!" Naruto yelled, his eyes shining at the thought.

"Oh, no she doesn't!" Tsunade interrupted.

"I agree," Kawazaki said, sipping some tea, "I don't think the world is ready to handle two superpowers just yet."

Everyone laughed. Outside the office door, the still out-cold Homura and Koharu were propped up against the opposing wall- their faces

covered in various scribbblings, including, but not limited too, words like "Uzumaki rules!" and "We suck!" as well as other little doodles.

"It's good to see you again, Kushina," Tsunade said, wiping a tear from her eye, "I was devastated when I heard you were dead."

"You should have more faith in me," Kushina scoffed, "Even if the Uchihas could back up their boasts, they couldn't kill me."

"The Uchihas?" Naruto asked, perplexed.

"They're the ones who stuck me on that island," Kushina explained, "Used some space-time ninjutsu with their Sharingan."

"Yeah..." Naruto said, thinking back, "I saw Kakashi-sensei do the same thing with his... But why would the Uchiha clan do it to you?"

"Because Fugaku was jealous." Kushina said scornfully.

"Who's Fugaku?" Naruto asked. That name sounded familiar...

"Fugaku Uchiha was the head of the Uchiha Clan before Itachi wiped it out," Tsunade answered, "He was Sasuke and Itachi's father on top of that." Tsunade glanced at Kushina. "You and he were rivals, right?"

"Rivals? Ha! We were enemies!" Kushina replied, sticking out her tongue, "every time the two of us saw one another, he'd try to kill me! He couldn't stand the idea that I was stronger than him!"

"Really? Awesome!" Naruto cheered, when a thought occurred.

"Wait, that's why the Uchiha Clan sent you to that island? That sounds kinda petty."

Kushina sighed. "Son, those Uchihas cared more about their standing and position than anything else. To them, being a Uchiha was like being a god on Earth. Even the Hyuugas could take lessons from them in arrogance. Ever since the first time I clobbered Fugaku, he's always been on my case."

Naruto thought back to when Sasuke had challenged him to a fight on the hospital roof. It was right after Naruto beat Gaara...someone who beat Sasuke!

"Let's forget about that, for now," Tsunade said, waving the issue aside, "There's not much we can do about it now, with him and the clan dead. There's something else we need to do, first."

"Which is?" Kushina asked.

"You're registration in the village." Tsunade explained, waving a form in the air, "Luckily, since you never registered as a shinobi, or even a civilian, there's no old papers to dig out and renew- just sign here."

Kushina reached out, but before she could get the form, Naruto snatched it out of Tsunade's hand. Reading it, he exclaimed, "Hey, you messed up! This is for registering as a civilian! Mama is Jonin-level, at least!"

Kushina laughed. "It's okay, Naruto. I don't mind."

"But-!" Naruto protested, but Kushina cut him off.

"Really, it's okay," Kushina assured, "I like being a freelancer. You get to choose your missions that way."

"Being a Village Ninja doesn't stop Naruto from doing that," Tsunade put in, "This maniac won't go on any mission that he feels are 'beneath him'."

Kushina glanced at Naruto, who refused to look sheepish. Giggling, she signed the paper. Tsunade gave the form a good stamp.

"Welcome to the Hidden Leaf Village, Uzumaki Kushina," She congratulated.

"Glad to be here," Kushina smiled, shaking Tsunade's hand. Withdrawing it, she said, "But there's something that's been bothering me since I got back..."

"What?" Kawazaki asked, "That some of your more foolhardy victims might form an attack squad and ambush you?"

"Nah, I can handle anybody in this village, no problem," Kushina shrugged, "It's my stuff."

"Stuff?" Naruto asked, his eyes squinting. (Even at sixteen, he still looked like a fox when he did that!)

"Just some of my positions I picked up here and there," Kushina explained, "Most of it's replaceable, but there are a few things that I want to keep...sentimental stuff, keepsakes. They were in my house..." A thought occurred to her. "Those stupid Uchihas better not have taken anything! If that Fugaku wore my Championship belt, I'll..."

"The Third took them."

Everyone looked to the doorway, where the voice was.

"Kakashi-Sensei!" Naruto cried.

Kakashi, number one Jonin of the Leaf Ninja, stood in the doorway, trying to look as aloof as he normally does. This act was slightly subverted by the subtle, very subtle, trickle of sweat running down his brow.

Kushina stared, wide-eyed. "Kakashi-kun?" She murmured in disbelief. Was this really that haughty squirt Minato trained?

Kakashi saw her fist clench, and braced himself for the worst. *She's going to let me have it. She's going to kill me for training Sasuke and not Naruto during that Chunin Exam, and for not being there for him during the early parts of his childhood, and no one will be able to stop her...*

"YOU'RE STILL WEARING THAT MASK!?" Kushina screamed, pointing an accusing finger at Kakashi.

Naruto and Kakashi stared bug-eyed, taken aback, while Tsunade chuckled. She had a feeling this was coming.

"What?" Kakashi asked, flabbergasted. *That's* why she was so upset?!

"I can't believe you!" Kushina yelled, "It's been fifteen years, and you still wear that dumb mask, like some little kid at a costume party!"

"B-but, shinobi are supposed to hide their identities..." Kakashi protested weakly.

"That doesn't work if the mask *becomes* your identity!"

Naruto blinked in confusion. *He wore that mask when he was a kid, too? That's pathetic...*

Kawasaki turned to Tsunade. "Well, if there's nothing else to be done, I'll be taking my leave."

"You're going?" Tsunade asked, eyebrow raised.

"Mm-hmm," Kawazaki nodded, "I have fixed the seal on Naruto's as best I can, so as long as he does not consciously call upon the Nine-tails' chakra, there should be no further problems. Besides, I have a dinner appointment with the Aburame Clan."

"The Aburame invited you to dinner!?" Tsunade asked in disbelief. Frogs and any other bug eating creature weren't normally allowed in the Aburame household.

"No." Kawazaki replied, hopping toward the door.

"So," Kushina said, once she, Kakashi and Naruto had left the office, "Where's my stuff? You said that the Third Hokge had it."

"After you, um, were declared legally dead," Kakashi explained, as they walked down the halls, "The Third Lord took possession of your

belongings, planning to give them to Naruto when he was old enough. Right after that Chunin Exam, actually. I don't have to tell you why he didn't..."

Kushina knew full well why not. Naruto had told her in full detail what had happened during that month. Her joy at hearing of his victory over one of the haughty Hyuugas (second in arrogance to the Uchiha Clan) had only been equaled by the shock of hearing about Sarutobi's death...by Orochimaru.

That snake... She thought, Killing the Third just because he stopped playing favorites...

As they reached the main doorway of the tower, Kakashi continued; "After he died, your things were put into storage with his...I'll show you the way."

As they left the building, they heard a strange, angry, growling noise fill the air.

"Grrrr... There you are...Kushina... Rrrrrr..."

It was Tsume. And she looked like a beast that could give a demon-powered Naruto a run for his money.

"Now...!" Tsume screeched, "My Hanone will be avenged!!!"

(A/N: Thaaat's it! It's over! The story has ENDED!

...Just kidding. Just thought I'd zing you readers like that. Dattebayo! The story isn't over yet. But, I can say this, it has only three chapters to go!

...Probably.

Anyway, can anyone guess what's got Kiba's mom so worked up? Here's a hint. That Council meeting. Oh yeah, and if you're

wondering when the Nara Clan got a cat, that came to me when I remembered a certain chapter cover that featured Shikamaru...with a cat. So I thought, 'Why not?' I originally was going to use that cat who ran away from the Daimyo's wife, but there's no way he could have lived for so long...Read, review, bye!)

Friends From Back Then

Kishimoto owns Naruto. So there

Opening theme: Oversoul (1st opening of Shaman King)

Chapter 7: Friends from Back Then

Kakashi did not like the situation that was developing. He had hoped they would get to the storage without a fight breaking out.

Unfortunately, those hopes were dashed by the appearance of Inuzuka Tsume, who had blood in her eyes.

Kushina, on the other hand, didn't seem very eager to fight, this time. Instead, she turned to her son and asked, "Who's that?"

"Um," Naruto began slowly, "I think that's my classmate Kiba's mom...I think." His eyes narrowed on the seething woman a few yards ahead of them. "Did you, uh, do something to her? She looks pretty mad..."

"I've never met this woman before in my life," Kushina answered. She cupped her hands over her mouth and called, "Hey, what's your problem?"

"My problem..." Tsume hissed, forming hand signs, "*Is you!!! Jinju Konbi Henge: Sotoro!!!!*"

There was a blast of smoke, and when it cleared, there was a monstrous, two-headed, savage beast of canine origin standing where Tsume and Kuromaru were standing.

Kushina stepped back in shock. "What-!"

"It's a monster!" Naruto cried, seriously freaked out. What the heck was going on!?

"Tsume! Calm down!" Kakashi yelled, holding out his hands as if to block an incoming attack.

But it was no good. The dog-beast lunged at Kushina, spinning rapidly.

" *Garuoga!!!!*"

"Naruto!" Kakashi yelled, grabbing his former pupil and pulling him far out of harm's range, "Get clear!"

"But," Naruto looked over to where Kushina hadn't budged, "What about mom!?"

By the time Kiba, Shino, and Akamaru arrived at the tower, having heard Tsume's battle cry, the battle was already over. What the two boys were expecting to find were the Inuzaku Patriarch and her chosen opponent being restrained by ANBU with the rest of the surrounding area looking more like a battlefield.

What they found, however, was Tsume and Kuromaru flat on the ground, out cold and beaten into bloody heap. Over them stood a woman with red hair, who, though fairly beautiful, displayed an aura of power and ability that only a Kage could.

"Mom!" Kiba cried in alarm while Akamaru barked along. As the Inuzuka pair ran over to check on their parents (A/N: I'm not sure if Kuromaru is Akamaru's dad...but it just might make sense), Shino looked over to where Naruto and Kakashi were. Naruto had a look of pure shock on his face, while Kakashi, as best he could tell, looked ill. Like he was expecting this, but wished he hadn't.

"Hey!" Kiba yelled, glaring up at the woman, "What's going on!?"

"That's what I wanna know!" the red-head shot back, "This crazy woman just tried to jump me...who is she, anyway?" She looked to Naruto and Kakashi for answers.

"Um, that's Kiba's mom, mama," Naruto answered weakly. It was one thing to smash down a gate, but to do the same thing to a moving target, on *top* of the rest of her counterattack...

Mama!? Kiba looked up at the woman. "You're Naruto's mom!?"

Kushina smiled, and held her hand up in greeting. "Hi! I'm Uzumaki Kushina! Nice to meet you!"

Kiba, a little bewildered at her change of attitude, nodded. "Um, same here."

"Don't...dare..." A weak voice drifted up from Tsume's body, "Talk to my son like that..."

"Mom!" Kiba quickly moved to help his mother up.

Sitting, a heavily beaten Tsume glared up at Kushina, pure and unfiltered hatred in her gaze. "After...what you did to...Hanone..."

"Hanone?" Kushina blinked. She looked at Kakashi and Naruto. "Who's this Hanone guy she keeps talking about?"

Kakashi took a deep breath before answering. "Hanone was the head of the Inuzuka clan, before your little war on the council."

Kushina and Naruto both cocked their heads. "Was?" Kushina asked, confused. "What happened to him?"

"Let's just say not everyone survived..." Kakashi trailed off, looking away.

Kushina(And Naruto) was about to ask for clarification when she realized what he meant. "Oh."

"You- Dad-!" Kiba flustered, looking from Kushina to Tsume. "You killed dad!?"

"Don't take it so personally. I was going for the entire council, not just him," Kushina replied. She looked thoughtful. "He must been the one Danzo hid behind..."

"But why!?" Kiba yelled, upset. What reason could possibly justify the death of a man and the attempted genocide of a governing body?

"They were going to kill my son." Kushina said simply, her eyes darkening. "How would you react?"

All of Kiba's anger left in an instant, leaving him confused. "K-kill? Kill Naruto?" He looked back at his old classmate. "Why would anyone do that?" Naruto had never, in those carefree childhood days, been popular with adults, but...

"Ask your mother." Kushina said, walking back to her son and Kakashi. "She knows more about it than I do."

As the Uzumaki family walked off, Kiba looked back at Tsume, who was glaring at the ground, unable to meet his eyes.

"To tell the truth and not reveal anything...smooth." Kakashi commented.

"It's not for me to say." Kushina replied. She glanced at Naruto, who looked a little despondent. "What's wrong?"

"I feel bad for Kiba..." He sighed. It was a little dis inheriting to learn that one's own mother had been the cause of the death of a friend's parent.

Kushina gave him a sad smile. "I do too, but it was either confess or deny it. And I don't like to lie."

"There you are!"

All three of them turned around to see Iruka run up to them. Judging from his breath, he must have been running all around the village.

"Hey! Iruka-Sensei!" Naruto waved, smiling brightly at his favorite teacher and de-facto father-figure. "Guess what! Know who this woman is!? She's my mom!" His smile dropped as a thought occurred to him. Looking at Kushina, he asked, "Hey, did you do anything bad to Iruka-Sensei?"

"Hey! What do you think of you're mother!?" Kushina demanded, insulted.

Iruka shook his head. "No, that's not it. I just wanted to meet Ms. Uzumaki, that's all." He looked at Kushina with shining eyes. "Itachi told me all about you...but I had no idea you were Naruto's mother!"

Kushina blinked. "Itachi...Uchiha Itachi?" She asked. "I was training him before those stupid Uchihes stuck me on that island... Did you meet him in the academy? He hadn't started yet, but..."

"Waitaminute!" Naruto cried, waving his arms in the air, trying to get everyone's attention. You pointed at Kushina. "You *trained* Itachi!?" He accused.

Kushina shrugged, not really seeing what the fuss was about. "Sure, right after you were born. His mom was a friend of mine, and asked me to teach him basic taijutsu. It sure got Fugaku upset when he found out I could Itachi more than him and the entire Uchiha Clan put together..." She chuckled at the memory, picturing Fugaku's angry face. "Of course, if he complained, I was more than willing to show Itachi which of us was the stronger master."

Kakashi remembered a scene similar to the one with Tsume, this time with Uchiha Fugaku lying face first in the street, and Kushina carrying a small whiskered bundle of joy. (Who was sleeping)

Shaking his head, Naruto whirled on Iruka. "And how did you know Itachi?" He asked, suspicious. Itachi, the traitor, the

murderer(Though all ninjas could be considered such...), the one who ruined Sasuke's life...and kind, loyal, thoughtful Iruka, who only wanted what was best for everyone.

Iruka smiled sheepishly at the incredulous look on Naruto's face. "I know, I know, but Itachi wasn't always...the way he is. We were part of the same Genin squad." He looked around. "Maybe we should keep moving we're blocking the traffic."

As the four of them started back on their walk, Iruka talked more about Itachi.

"After the Ninetails, many parents pulled their kids out of the academy and left the village," Iruka explained, "So the Rookie 9 was filled with genin that were differently aged. That's how Itachi and I first met."

Naruto couldn't help but notice that Iruka had a far-off look in his eye, like Jiraiya had when talking about his own Genin days, or the Fourth Hokage.

"He was a little bit like you, Naruto," Iruka continued, "Always tried to cover his sadness with a smile...come to think of it, you were better at that...he never fooled anyone."

As Naruto took that in, Kushina said, "He was like that, but ended up becoming a mass murderer...I wonder how bad a father Fugaku was...to push Itachi in that direction."

Iruka sighed. "Like you did with Sasuke, I confronted Itachi about what he had done." He said, "But..."

Iruka trailed off. Naruto couldn't help but ask, "Did he tell you? Why he killed his family?"

Iruka didn't answer. Instead, he became determinedly fascinated with a cloud shaped like a jolly roger. A thought then occurred to Naruto. There was a disturbing pattern in Leaf Ninja. Looking at

Kakashi, he asked, "Hey, did something like that happen to you, Kakashi-Sensei? Did one of your teammates run away?"

Kakashi found himself looking back on that day when Obito went to rescue Rin, abandoning the mission they were on, and as a whole jeopardizing the Leaf's struggle in the 3rd War.

"Yeah," The Copy Ninja said at last, "But I doubt you'd be sympathetic in my case."

Everyone stared at him.

At last, the group arrived at the storage area where Sarutobi's belongings were kept. Getting permission to enter was easy, the manager of the warehouse having been alerted by Tsunade beforehand.

Entering the warehouse, Kakashi said, "There wasn't much to recover from your house, Ms. Kushina, so we were able to put it all in a box...should be around here somewhere..."

Naruto pointed. "Is that it?"

Over in a corner, away from the normal stack of boxes, was a large cardboard box, with numerous seals and anti-spirit wards stuck on. A big sign over it said, 'DANGER! DO NOT TOUCH! CURSED OBJECTS OF DOOM!!!'

"Yeah, that's it." Kakashi deadpanned.

Kushina slapped her forehead. "'Cursed objects of...' It's just some junk I picked up here and there! I don't have anything cursed, or magical!"

"Well, because we never found your body, most of the village believed you had become a vengeful spirit in death." Kakashi responded. He decided not to mention that belief alone is what kept

Naruto for the most part untouched during the early years of his childhood. Those who felt brave enough to go against the Third's intent to give Naruto a happy life were scared off by the prospect of dealing with the wrath of phantom Kushina, after seeing the living Kushina pound anyone she perceived as threatening her son into the ground.

Suddenly, there was a blast of smoke over at the box.

"What the-?!" Iruka cried, leaping back.

Everyone readied themselves for a fight when a proud voice echoed throughout the room.

"Making his long awaited appearance! The man whom even the gods admit envy of! Heaven! Hell! The man who stands at the threshold of all, the immortal Toad Sage, Gallant Jiraiya!"

POW!

"OW!" Jiraiya cried, falling off the box he was posing on. He glared at his apprentice. "What was that for?" He demanded, indignant.

"Dammit, Ero-Sennin!" Naruto yelled, fist extended, "Warn us before you launch one of your surprise appearances!"

"Idiot!" Jiraiya returned Naruto's punch with one of his own. "If I warned you about them, they wouldn't be surprising!"

As the three adults watched master and apprentice bicker, Kushina couldn't help but smile.

"Ero-Sennin...I like that."

I'm back! Sorry for taking so long! I really am! How'd you like the little bombs I dropped? I got the idea of Kushina being Itachi's first

teacher from this story by WingsofMorpheus called, Weasel In A Whirlpool. It's not complete...but the only chapter it has is very good!

As for the Iruka-Itachi friendship, I don't know where I got that... maybe someone came up with it before me, I don't know. But I now think it'd be pretty cool(And weird) if the people who had the biggest impacts on Naruto and Sasuke, respectively, were once teammates like they were, just a parallel thing... Sortof like the alledge Kushina-Fugaku rivalry. I don't know when I'll update next, so just stay tuned!

Oh ya.

Jinju Konbi Henge: Sotoro : Man Beast Combination Transformation:
Double-Headed Wolf

Garōga : Dual Wolf Fang

Naruto's Lullaby

Kishimoto owns Naruto (Which has gotten a little better, I think..Sennin Mode Naruto rocks!)

Theme song: Tsumo Te no Naka Ni (Opening theme for *Dokkoida!?*)

Chapter 8: Naruto's Lullaby

" So you're leaving too?" Kushina said. It wasn't a question.

She was sitting on a couch, overlooking a playpen where a year-old baby Naruto was in. the baby was staring at a little fox plushy with unnatural fascination.

Jiraiya, clad in his shinobi, nodded. "Yeah, I'd thought I should say goodbye, first. I don't want to leave, but I have to find Orochimaru. No one else in the village stands a chance against him."

Orochimaru, considered by as one of the most powerful ninja in the world, had gone rogue, after being caught performing illegal experiments on members of the village, civilian and ninja alike. He fled, following a brief fight with the 3 rd Hokage, and no one knew where to look.

" Tsunade could beat him," Kushina pointed out, "You Sannin are all at the same level, after all."

Jiraiya smirked. "True, but she's not here." The Princess had left the village a year ago, and hadn't been seen since. "I'm sure she'll hear about it, wherever she is, but I doubt she'll go out of her way to look for him. Anyway..." He looked away, "She doesn't have the stake in this that I do."

" And what's that?" Kushina asked, intrigued.

Jiraiya took a deep breath. "I didn't know what Orochimaru was doing until it was too late. I should've been more attentive," he looked down ashamed, "Maybe all those people he butchered would still be alive..."

" You can't blame yourself for what he did," Kushina put in, "From what I hear, taking the blame is what old Sarutobi's doing, for letting him go."

Jiraiya smiled grimly. The 3rd Lord was certainly taking a lot of heat from Danzo's faction. "That's why I need to go. The sooner I take down Orochimaru, the sooner they'll stop complaining."

Kushina folded her arms, giving him an appraising look. "And how long is that going to take?"

" Oh, about a year," Jiraiya bragged, in an off-hand sort of way. Getting serious, he said, "I really have no idea. Orochimaru's a master of stealth. And there's no telling where he might go. He left no indication of his future plans in his lab."

" Which means you might never be back," Kushina sighed, falling back onto the couch. "So that's two good men of the Leaf gone forever."

" I'll be back!" Jiraiya insisted, "So don't worry." He looked down at Naruto, who, having lost interest in merely staring at the fox plushy, began to poke, prod, and squeeze it in several places. "Naruto won't go his life without knowing his Grampa Jiraiya," He bent down and leaned into Naruto's space. "Wontcha, Naruto?"

The baby looked up at Jiraiya and blinked, squinting like a cartoon fox. Then he went back to his fox flailing.

" Don't you think he's showing too much interest in that toy?" Jiraiya asked, looking up at Kushina, "Most kids that age aren't that attached to toys like that."

" That just shows how smart he is," Kushina smiled, "He knows what a fox means."

' That's what worries me!' Jiraiya thought.

"That was the last time I saw you." Kushina sighed.

Jiraiya nodded. Off to the side, Naruto carried the 'Box of Doom' while Kakashi and Iruka, in a display of professionalism not seen lately, ruffled through it. Kakashi pulled out a fox plushy that made Naruto stare. It looked familiar...but where did those scorch marks come from?

"Twelve years I spent, collecting data on Orochimaru, and then Akatsuki," Jiraiya said, "And when I came back, I couldn't find you, or Naruto. No one would say if they knew where you had gone. I thought you had left, taking Naruto with you. When I went to the hot springs for some relaxation, I found Naruto."

"Naruto told me about that," Kushina laughed. "He had you pegged the minute he saw you."

"Yeah, yeah." Jiraiya grumbled. He saw the time on a clock in a shop window. "It's been great to see you again, but there's a pressing situation I need to check into right now. Farewell!" And with a that, Jiraiya was gone.

Kushina blinked. "What's going on now?" She asked, looking at the three by the box.

Naruto grimaced. "Now's when the Leaf Young Women's Club has their meeting at the hot springs."

"Pervert." Kushina muttered.

"Actually, I should be going too," Iruka said, "My class is starting."

As they watched Iruka run off, Kakashi gave a yell.

"What's wrong?" Naruto asked, wide-eyed.

"I just remembered, I was due for a mission briefing!" Kakashi cried in alarm, "Gotta go! Later!"

Kakashi was gone in a flash.

"The Doc was right." Kushina commented.

"Huh? What?" Naruto asked, only half-listening.

"Nothin'." Kushina said, with a dismissive wave. Pointing onward and upward, she declared, "Now, let's go home!"

She took a step forward...before looking back at Naruto. "Um, where *is* home?"

In the underground area used as meeting areas for the illegal ANBU division known as Root, Danzo stood in front four Root agents. Beside him was a poster of Kushina, taken some sixteen years ago. She was making funny faces at the camera. This area was the center of all of Danzo's dreams and schemes. And these four were the most powerful stealth assassins in the entire village. At least, they better be.

"This mission is to be your most important." He began, not bothering to bid the four hello, or even show he was glad to see them. Such displays of familiarity were for weaklings. The next day could be the day they die, so why bother?

"Your mission is to kill this woman the minute she is alone," Danzo said, tapping the poster with his cane. "You four are the most effective agents Root has to offer," He continued, "I see no reason why you should fail."

"Lord Danzo?" One of the Root four asked, "Didn't that woman die fifteen years ago?"

"She was presumed dead," Danzo answered, "But no one found her body."

Root number 2 raised his hand. "Is it true that this woman is the Fourth Hokage's equal?"

Was that fear in the agent's voice? Danzo decided that he must have imagined it. the first and foremost step to becoming a Root agent was the elimination of all emotions. Those who let their emotions were those who were weak.

"While some might consider Uzumaki Kushina to be the Forth Lord's equal," He answered testily, "Those are the ones who do not realize that to be a shinobi requires more than just brute strength. You need intelligence, speed, stealth, and above all, *self control* ."

For some reason, despite wearing masks, Danzo thought they looked nervous. "You'll be fine if you don't fight her directly. Now go!"

As the Root Four vanished, Danzo allowed himself a dark smile. Finally, after sixteen years, his arm, along with his array of ninjutsu, would finally be avenged!

And maybe the stump would stop hurting.

"We're home!" Naruto yelled, kicking the door to his apartment open. As he and his mother entered, Kushina took in her surroundings. It didn't look too bad...for a bachelor pad.

"Where should I put this stuff?" Naruto asked. He was still holding the Box of Doom.

"Oh, just put it by the bed," Kushina said, not really paying attention. She was currently looking through the kitchen area. So far, all she could find were packets of instant ramen...

Then it occurred to her. "Hey, where *is* my bed?" She asked.

That little detail had also escaped Naruto until now.

"Uh, I dunno..." Frowning, Naruto tried to think of a solution. "I might have some *futons* in the closet...they've never been used, so they might work..."

Kushina nodded. "Okay, set it up. I'll be right back."

"Huh?" Naruto asked, "Where are you going?"

"Just to buy some groceries," Kushina replied, heading for the door. "We don't have nearly enough food for dinner, especially for what I'm gonna make!"

Naruto stopped right there. "Wh-what?"

"Bye!" Kushina yelled over her shoulder, slamming the door behind her.

Naruto stood where he was, shell-shocked. *Mama's...gonna make dinner?*

"The target is leaving the building alone. Repeat, the *target is alone!*"

"Roger. Prepare to intercept."

After Naruto had set up the *futon* and blankets up in the corner, he lay down on his own bed. In his hand was the fox plushy.

Mom's gonna make me dinner... He thought, tossing the somewhat well-done plushy in the air.

He remembered seeing happy families, as a child and hearing how parents would make their children's 'favorite dinner' if they were good.

Is it my turn...? Naruto caught the fox plushy, and stared at it. Will this be my favorite dinner...?

The somewhat reformed Root agent dubbed Sai walked down the dark streets of the Leaf Village, a paper bag full of groceries. He had been doing some late-night shopping when he passed by a woman with red hair.

Red hair? That woman matched the description of Naruto's mother. Sai wasn't all that sure if that woman really was Uzumaki Kushina...he had returned to the village after a mission(Which, compared to the ones he performed with Naruto, was very dull...a sense of which he never had before) to find the village gates in shambles and the village itself in a flurry of rumors. After trying and failing to locate Naruto, Sai decided to just wait until fate allowed him to meet Kushina. Was this that time?

Also, he realized in an afterthought, she was being followed.

Quickly sealing his groceries in a scroll, Sai moved to tail her, and her tailers. As he moved about the shadows, he just barely heard her mutter, "When did they jack up the prices so much?"

Sai was certain that her followers were skilled ninja, but who could infiltrate the Leaf Village at night- when security was at its highest? And who *would* ? Sai dimly recalled a rumor that several of the veterans held a grudge against Kushina- if that's who she was.

I hope she doesn't she doesn't do anything stupid like walk into a dark alleyway... Sai thought...just as the woman entered a dark alleyway.

Resisting the urge to slap his forehead(A mannerism he witness Captain Yamato do whenever Naruto or Sakura did something outlandish) Sai moved to follow her.

Naruto was busy going through Kushina's box when he heard the door slam.

"I'm home!" Kushina's voice rang out.

Naruto quickly something that looked like a dried-up snail with a rotary dial and speaker back in the box and went out to meet her.

"Sorry it took me so long," Kushina said, putting the bags on the kitchen counter. "Some guys held me up while I was out."

"What happened?" Naruto asked.

"Don't worry about it," Kushina replied, "I took care of them."

Sai stared. Whatever he was expecting, the scene before him was not it.

The four attackers were definitely ANBU, (Root? Most likely) but you couldn't tell that from the state of their uniforms, or their bodies.

Their clothes had been blasted(?) into tatters, only their boxer shorts showed any signs of undamaged. Their masks were shattered, their limbs mangled, and one ANBU had been pinned to one of the alley walls by several shuriken. One had the misfortune of being tied up by his arms and legs, like a circus contortionist in a stunt gone wrong. Horribly wrong.

I think I'll meet her tomorrow. Sai decided.

Back at Uzumaki central, Kushina stared at the kitchen.

"What's wrong?" Naruto asked.

"...It's been fifteen years since I used a stove."

Naruto facefaulted.

After getting re-acquainted with the basics of kitchen use, Kushina got right to it. Naruto watched from the table.

"Hm-hm hmhmmm..." She hummed, making what she hoped was dinner, " *Hmm* hmhmmm..."

"Ready for dinner, Naruto?" Kawazaki asked.

"Yeah, I've never felt so hungry..." Naruto did a double-take.

"Kawazaki! Where did you come from?! And where have you been!"

"I was at *Chez Arubume* for a snack," Kawazaki explained, "The food was exquisite, but the service was very poor."

I'll bet it was. Naruto thought, having a pretty good idea on how a clan of bug-users would react to a frog in their home.

Looking back at Kushina, Kawazaki commented, "Ahh, I haven't heard this song in decades, not since my last trip to the Land of Whirlpools."

"Huh? You've heard this before?" Naruto asked. Come to think of it, it sounded very familiar to him as well...

"Oh, yes," Kawazaki said, "Back then, there was a gang of pirates who used that country as their base, and they sang this song every time they partied themselves drunk."

"When you were born, I started using it as a lullaby to put you to sleep," Kushina went on, placing different dishes on the table. "To me, this song represents the call of adventure, and the joy of new experiences." Sitting down across from Naruto, she said, "Well! Dig in! Tell me what you think!"

Naruto looked at the spread before him. In the middle of the table was large bowl of ramen. To the left side was a plate of grilled salmon, chopped for convenience. To the right was salad, made from an assortment of different vegetables. Pulling some ramen onto his

plate, along with a piece of salmon(the salad was untouched). After a moment of anticipation, Naruto swallowed it all in a single gulp!

"Hey!" Kushina cried, "Slow down!" After a moment, she asked, "Well? How is it?"

Tears were streaming down his face. "It's good..." Naruto whispered, before helping himself to seconds.

Kawazaki had a feeling it wouldn't have mattered how the food actually tasted. Naruto seemed so excited to eat his mother's cooking that he probably would have said it was good regardless.

Satisfied with her son's satisfaction, Kushina began to eat.

After about five minutes of silence, Naruto asked, "Hey, mama?"

"Hmm?" Kushina had a mouthful of ramen.

"That song you were singing..." Naruto said, "Can I hear the lyrics? Please?"

Kushina swallowed her ramen. "Sure." She smiled.

Sixteen years ago, October 10.

" So there's no other way?" Kushina asked. She had just been through the 'miracle' of childbirth, and now held a newborn Naruto in her arms. The infant was without whiskers.

" I wish there was," Namikaze Minato, 4 th Hokage of the Leaf, said. "Or we wouldn't be having this conversation." He looked down sadly, before asking, in a small, pleading, pitiful voice, "Can I hold him?"

" What?"

" You'll have your whole life with him," Minato explained, "I've only got a few hours."

Smiling sadly, Kushina handed the bundle of joy to her boyfriend.

As Minato stared at Naruto, he couldn't help but notice how blue the baby's eyes were. His eyes, on the other hand, were beginning to tear up.

" Before you go...how about a song?"

Minato and Kushina looked up from where they were- Minato standing and Kushina lying- to a tall man over by the doorway of the room they were in. His face was partially obscured by the shadow cast by the wide-brimmed hat he was wearing. Only his mouth was visible.

" Doc?" Kushina asked, blinking, "What do you mean?"

The Doc snapped his fingers and a piano wheeled in. Sitting down on the seat, the Doc said, "A very old man once said that death is the next great adventure. This song, commonly used by the sailors of the skull and crossbones, is the perfect send-off for a man about to take that adventure head-on. How about it?"

The couple exchanged looks.

" Why not," Minato grinned, a bit mournfully, "I've got nothing better do after today. The Fox can wait a few more minutes."

The Doc, unseen by all, pushed a button on a small device on the piano. He then began to play.

" Yohohoho, yohohoho!

Yohohoho, yohohoho!

Yohohoho, yohohoho!

Yohohoho, yohohoho!

Going to deliver Binks' Sake

Following the sea breeze!

Riding on the waves

Far across the salty depths!

The merry evening sun

Painting circles in the sky

As the birds sing!

Farewell to the harbor

To my old hometown

Lets all sing out with a Don!

As the ship sets sail

Waves of gold and silver

Dissolve to salty spray

As we all set sail to

The ends of the sea!"

Naruto soon found himself singing along, repeating lyrics he didn't know he knew, while Kawazaki conducted with his pipe, merrily ribbit-ing along.

" Going to deliver Bink's Sake!

We are pirates

Sailing through the Sea!

The waves are our pillows

The ship our roost

Flying the proud Skull

On our flags and our sails!"

Fifteen years ago, Kushina sang to her baby while Uchiha Itachi practiced his katas.

" Now comes a storm

Through the far-off sky

Now the waves are dancing

Beat upon the drums

If you loose your nerve

This breath could be your last

But if you just hold on,

The morning sun will rise!

Yohohoho, yohohoho!

Yohohoho, yohohoho!

Yohohoho, yohohoho!

Yohohoho, yohohoho!"

Elsewhere, in some foreign country outside of the Land of Fire, Uchiha Itach took a walk away from where he and Kisame were camping. Looking up at the starry sky, he began to sing.

" Going to deliver Bink's Sake

*Today, and tomorrow,
Our dreams through the night
Waving our goodbyes,
We'll never meet again!
But don't look so down;
For at night the moon will rise."*

In the apartment, the singing was now at full power. People in the nearby rooms and buildings were wondering what party was happening. Outside, Jiraiya smiled.

" Going to deliver Bink's Sake!

Let's all sing it with a Don!

A song of the waves

Doesn't matter who you are,

Someday you'll just be bones

Never-Ending, Ever-wandering,

Our funny Traveling tale!

Yohohoho, yohohoho!

Yohohoho, yohohoho!

Yohohoho, yohohoho!

Yohohoho, yohohoho!"

The Doc felt a strong wind, and knew at once that the Uzumaki family was gone, through the use of Minato's Hiraishin no Jutsu.

" There they go, the conquering heroes," the Doc sighed, still playing the melody. After a minute, he rubbed his eyes, feeling tears running down his face. "Damn it... This is what I hate about shinobi...always leaving too quickly, without a decent goodbye!"

With that, he stopped playing and began to sob.

Naruto was crying too, but not from any sadness. His smile had never been so wide, his heart never felt so light.

Things just keep getting better and better! He thought, smiling as bright as the sun.

The end! For real, this time!

With this chapter, I official place Naruto realm inside the One Piece world! Maybe!

To be honest, I originally came up with the concept of Kushina having a popular song as a lullaby for Naruto months before the One Piece episode with Binks' Sake, but when I heard the full song, I thought, 'Wow! I'm including that!' or something to that effect. Originally, I was gonna use Ai no Uta from Pikmin in a much different flashback. Oh, and the song and series Binks' Sake comes from belongs to Eiichiro Oda. Yeah, I know, I'm copying the concept, but since the song is for pirates, and Naruto 's most popular characters are copy-ninjas, I figure I'm okay. (I'm probably not, though. Sorry.) And just so you know, the Doc mentioned is not just some stand-in or shout out to Dead Bones Brook. He's veeery different from that skeleton...you'll see later on, in another story I'm planning. Heheh... Oh yeah, before I forget...

Hiraishin no Jutsu – Flying Thunder God Technique.